



STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR HARDEEP SINGH PURI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
AT THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE ON SOUTH-SOUTH
COOPERATION ON FEBRUARY 04, 2010

Mr. President,

We offer our felicitations to you and other members of the Bureau on your election and thank the outgoing Bureau for the work accomplished over the last two years.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Yemen on behalf of the G-77 and China.

India welcomes the Nairobi Outcome Document adopted at the High-Level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation held in Kenya from 1-3 December, 2009. We call for its full and effective implementation to really strengthen South-South Cooperation.

Mr. President,

India's approach to South-South Cooperation has been moulded by our own experience in nation building. We have, therefore, been a steadfast believer in South-South Cooperation. This constitutes a fundamental pillar of our external policy. For decades, we have endeavored to share our experiences and knowledge with our fellow countries from the South treading similar paths of development. This has taken several forms.

As early as 1964, India recognized that capacity building is a key development need, and established the Indian Technical and Economic Co-operation (ITEC) Programme as an important means of channelizing India's technical assistance to fellow developing countries. This flagship programme covers 158 developing partner countries with over 5000 participants being offered training in 200 courses spread across 42 leading

institutions each year in a wide range of areas from hi-tech like IT, S&T, pharmaceuticals to agriculture, rural development, SMEs, etc. The ITEC programme is demand-driven and response-oriented.

We are happy that today we are also able to extend our partnership in a significant manner financially. Our annual outlay on concessional lending and grants is over US\$ 1 billion, covering countries in our region, in Africa and beyond. In addition, US\$ 5 billion has been extended as lines of credit since 2003.

Apart from countries in our neighborhood, we have a rich agenda of technical cooperation with Africa, a continent with which we have age-old ties, that currently spans several initiatives including the path-breaking Pan African E-network project and the TEAM-9 initiative focused on West Africa that seeks to bridge the 'digital divide' between Africa and the rest of the world. The Government of India has extended over US\$ 3 billion concessional lines of credit to countries in Africa. During the India-Africa Forum Summit held in April 2008 in New Delhi, we had announced additional lines of credit of US\$ 5.4 billion for the next five years. Further, on the same occasion, we had proposed to undertake projects against grants in excess of US\$ 500 million over the next 5 – 6 years. These are being implemented in consultation with our African partners. We have also unilaterally agreed to duty free and quota free market access to goods from 34 Least Developed Countries in Africa.

Furthermore, India has endeavored to be of assistance in times of humanitarian crisis both in our region and beyond. Recently, as a token of our solidarity with the people of Haiti, we have contributed US\$ 5 million for relief measures following the earthquake.

The IBSA initiative undertaken by India, Brazil, and South Africa is another manifestation of our commitment to South-South Cooperation. IBSA is intensifying its partnership efforts in several regions across the developing world and more initiatives are in the pipeline.

Mr. President,

India is committed to doing more in the coming years with our partners in the South and stepping up our support to South-South Cooperation.

Our cooperation with fellow developing countries is premised on the principles of voluntary partnership, free from conditionalities that are typical of ODA, and are based on national ownership and in line with national priorities of our partners. We believe

that South-South cooperation is a partnership in solidarity between developing countries involving sharing of experiences, expertise, knowledge and provision of assistance based on capacity to partner. Its paradigm, therefore, is distinct from that of North-South development cooperation.

We must also be clear that South-South cooperation cannot replace the critical need for enhanced and invigorated development cooperation from the North for developing countries to overcome their considerable development challenges. This is even more important as we draw close to the 2015 deadline for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

The United Nations, with its universal membership and strong mandate for development, is uniquely placed to perform a catalytic role in this process. We hope to receive strong support from the UN development system in invigorating South-South Cooperation and triangular cooperation. We also hope that our developed country partners will strive to ensure that they meet their development cooperation commitments to help developing countries meet their development goals.

Thank You, Mr. President.

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